

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A lymph node detecting apparatus comprising:

an excitation light source, illuminating excitation light onto a living body observation portion that includes a lymph node near a tumor into which a fluorescent dye that emits fluorescence of a predetermined wavelength has been injected in advance;

an optical filter, transmitting a fluorescence image generated from the living body observation portion;

an image pickup device, picking up the fluorescence image transmitted through the optical filter;

an adjusting means, adjusting at least one of a luminance and a contrast of an observation image output from the image pickup device; and

an image displaying means; displaying the observation image, adjusted by the adjusting means, as an image for detecting the lymph node, wherein

the optical filter transmits simultaneously, in addition to the fluorescence image ~~and transmits~~, at a predetermined light intensity, a reflection image from the living body observation portion illuminated by the excitation light, and

the observation image, in which a fluorescence picture image that corresponds to the fluorescence image and a normal picture image that corresponds to the reflection image of the excitation light are overlapped, is obtained in a single image acquisition by the single image pickup device.

Claim 2 (Previously Presented): The lymph node detecting apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the image pickup device is integral with the excitation light source.

Claim 3 (Canceled).

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The lymph node detecting apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the image displaying means is mountable onto a head portion of an observer.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The lymph node detecting apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising an image recording means, recording the observation image adjusted by the adjusting means.

Claim 6 (Previously Presented): The lymph node detecting apparatus according to Claim 1, further comprising: a light guide means for guiding the excitation light from the excitation light source to the living body observation portion; and an image guide means for guiding the fluorescence image from the living body observation portion to the image pickup device; and being arranged as an endoscopic apparatus.

Claim 7 (New): The lymph node detecting apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the optical filter transmits the reflection image at the light intensity no more than the fluorescence intensity of the fluorescence image.

Claim 8 (New): The lymph node detecting apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the optical filter transmits the reflection image at the light intensity of no more than 10% of the fluorescence intensity of the fluorescence image.